

POWER SHOPPING

When the economy is down we tend to let our appearance slide; yet, that is exactly when we need to be putting forth an extra effort to make sure we look our best. Looking your best does not have to cost a lot of money. Not only will looking sharp help you feel better, it will help you maintain a professional edge that visually says, "You are worth keeping; in fact, you deserve a promotion and a raise."

Stretching Your Wardrobe Dollar

Finding the perfect outfit for that special interview or occasion doesn't mean a trip to the mall. The first store you should go to is your closet.

- From your closet, make a list of wardrobe pieces that are your best fit, colors, styles, and in good repair
- Now pick the one item that everyone compliments you on
- Using that WOW item as a base, see how many different outfits you can pull together from your closet
- Write down or take a picture of each combinations that works
- Try on different accessories—the exact same outfit can suddenly become entirely different.
- Is there any item that can be added to make a big difference —is it a better looking white shirt, replacing worn out black slacks or updating your dress shoes? If the answer is yes; head to the mall.

* For additional closet organization tips go to page 100 in my book, **101 Secret Tips and Tricks from a Hollywood Costumer for Everyday People**—by Camile Schroeder Morris.

Re-visiting Style – Low Cost Tips for Becoming Relatable with a Professional Edge

Fashion and style are two words that most of us use interchangeably; yet, they each mean different things. Fashion is the current custom of dressing. What is fashionable in one area of the world to one culture is completely out of vogue in another. Thus, being fashionable or trendy in Uganda is not the same as it is in China; nor is fashion in California the same as it is in Paris. We all want to feel like we are “up with the times;” but somehow, what is in fashion on the runways or in the stores doesn't always meet our individual needs. That is where style comes in. Style is more of a distinctive way of expressing oneself. Every person's style is individualized through the combination of their body shape and scale, face shape and features, personality, and audience. I say audience as opposed to community or peers, because that is really what we are all trying to do, communicate our life story. To Quote Shakespeare, "*All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players:*" so, "*What ere thou art, act well thy part.*" I want to change that slightly, due to my being a costume designer, and say, "*What ere thou art, dress well thy part.*"

We all want to fit in, even when our audiences differ. The audience at home differs from the audience at work, school, or church. In my line of work, the audience differs from job to job. When I interview to costume a project based out of California, I need to dress hip and artistic;

that way, they feel that I will be creative and fashion aware. When my audience is corporate based for an in-house video, I dress in business attire showing them that I have my act together and can get the job done on time, under budget, and with professional quality. When my interview is for a project that will take not only my knowledge but the ability to hike through a remote canyon and keep up with the actors and camera crew; jeans are definitely in order.

The key factor to being confident and comfortable--while relating with your audience--is to always include a sense of self. As I dress for my varying audiences, I maintain loyalty to my true style and character personalities by adding an artistic flair. "*This above all else, unto thy own self be true.*" Shakespeare. Relating to your audiences will draw people to you, as they will want to know who you are and what you do, giving you a professional edge and increasing your bottom line—profitability.

*For more details on how you can become more relatable to your audiences through style, go to refer to Style Builder Workbook and Power Point.

Wardrobe Cents

As a costume designer and stylist, I power shop. I get in and out of the store fast, keep within my budget and still maintain a sense of style for my actors. You can use my system to stretch your wardrobe dollar, save time, and get the look you want.

1. Make a list of your wardrobe needs and take it with you when you shop
2. Wear or bring with you the items you need to match for color and texture.
3. Bring a friend who will tell you what really looks good on you
4. Shop color and texture; it will save you time
5. Shop for styles that fit your body shape and personality as well as the audience you will be wearing it in front of
6. Shop for fit; notice, I didn't say size. Each manufacturer will size their clothing slightly different. Designers build their lines for different body types. You will wear a smaller size with high-end clothing lines.
7. Shop price last and stay within your budget.
8. Try it on in the store, not only are returns a hassle, they waste your time and money.
9. Shop accessories for a quick, inexpensive way to finish your look.

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